

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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## CHRISTIAN LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION CENTER PLANNED

Concrete plans for the establishment of a Christian Literature Distribution Center are being drawn up by the Board of Directors of the Japan NCC Christian Literature Commission (CLC) to be deliberated on for approval by the NCC Executive Committee meeting in January and then presented for final approval at the NCC Annual Assembly in March, 1966.

Tomio Muto, Chairman of the Board of Directors of CLC, attended the World Literature Fund Conference in London in November, 1965, as a Central Committee, and secure informal approval of \$70,000 in response to a request for \$140,000 to aid in distribution of literature in Japan.

According to the Kirisuto Shimbum (The Christ Weekly), which reported the above, Mr. Muto also stated that additional funds are to be raised in Japan to bring the total ¥125 million (\$347,222).

Tentative plans also reported were that the NCC Christian Literature Commission would secure status as a joint-stock corporation by obtaining government recognition as a zaidan hojin (juridical foundation) to adequately administer the funds received.

## BUDDHISTS OPPOSE PLAN TO FORM WORLD BUDDHIST CHURCH

Three member organizations of the All-Japan Buddhist Association voiced strong opposition to a recent proposal to form a World Buddhist Church, jointly announced in Tokyo last month.

Opposing the proposed formation were the International Buddhist Missionary Council, the Modern Buddhist Research Council and the Nihon-Zan Temple.

According to representatives of these three groups, the protest against formation of such a world religious body was based on the possibility that such a union might be used for political purposes.



The joint proposal for formation of a World Buddhist Church had been made by Tam Chau, head of the United Buddhist Church of Vietnam, Taijun Toyohara, head of the All-Japan Buddhist Association, and Tokumei Matsumoto, chairman of the Japanese National Committee of the Afro-Asian Council.

#### TOKYO ORPHANS TO SEE "THE GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD"

Orphans in the Tokyo area will be invited to see the picture "The Greatest Story Ever Told," showing at a large uptown theatre, on December 24.

During the intermission, the youngsters will be given soft drinks and at the end of the show each will be presented with a pack lunch including a Christmas card.

The Ecumenical Committee for the All Christian Joint Christmas Charity Show is in charge of preparations and fund raising. About a million yen in donations is hoped for to help "give one day of joy and enduring hope to those who are deprived of it in their lifelong Calvary."

Dr. John Gingerich, of the Tokyo Union Church, and Fr. Marcel Blais, of the Hatsudai Catholic Church in Tokyo, are heading the joint action.

#### DR. HELEN KIM SPEAKS TO KOREAN CHRISTIANS IN JAPAN

Dr. Helen Kim, Executive Secretary of Nation-Wide Evangelism Committee 1969 (Korea), was the principal speaker at Evangelism meetings held in Kawasaki and Osaka by the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ). In her visit to a Korean high school in Japan, she presented the challenge of the Christian faith to the young people.

Following her appearances in Japan, Dr. Kim proceeded to New York to attend meetings of the United Nations as official representative of Korea.

#### JAPANESE-KOREAN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

An Important step towards mutual understanding was made at the 2nd meeting of the Japanese-Korean Christian Fellowship Society, held November 22 at the Tokyo Korean Church, when it was decided that the Korean Christians in Japan should initiate efforts to be a bridge for contacts between the Christian Church in Korea and the Christian Churches in Japan.

Representatives from the Society are to prepare an official statement of their "Joint Action For Mission," which is to center in the Korean Community in Japan.

Also, in the area of Japanese-Korean Christian Fellowship, The Japan Christian Academy organization in Osaka called both Japanese and Korean church leaders together on November 28-29 for dialogue on outstanding Japan-Korea issues. It was decided to meet soon again and to discuss the minority situation of Koreans in Japan.

#### CALVIN'S INSTITUTES AND COMMENTARIES CONTINUE IMPRESSIVE SALES

According to a report of the Japan Calvin Translation Society dated December, 1965, the total number of part-volumes of the Institutes which have been sold now totals 16,000 copies, with earlier translated volumes having been reprinted five times.

The report also notes that among the Commentaries, Romans is now in its sixth printing and I Corinthians and Galatians-Ephesians in their third printing with almost all of the Commentaries having been reprinted at least once.

An interesting aspect of these impressive sales is that not only pastors and teachers but also teen-agers, housewives, laborers and other professional laymen are reading the volumes. The report states that Calvin's Works are "filling a need in the spread of the gospel and in a deepened understanding of the Christian faith in Japan."



The Japanese translation of the Institutes was completed in July of this year and a comprehensive index, which includes bibliographical notes concerning the people cited in the Institutes, was published separately in September.

Rev. Nobuo Watanabe, young translator of the Institutes, was honored with his wife at a testimonial dinner held in Tokyo in November. Rev. Watanabe is kept busy attending special gatherings and lectures being held in major cities in Japan to commemorate the completion of the Institutes.

The report also showed the progress made in the publication of commentaries since 1962: 1962, Galatians-Ephesians; 1963, Epistles of Peter, Jude and John; 2 Corinthians, and the Gospel of John, Vol. I; 1965, The Gospel of John, Vol. II Hebrews-James will appear early in 1966.

Also, according to the report, in response to increasing request, the Translation Society hopes to initiate work on a few of the Old Testament Commentaries. This will be the third phase of the translation project; the second phase includes two volumes of tracts and essays plus three volumes of sermons, with one volume of tracts already being published.

However, the third phase awaits adequate funds, as the margin of profit on previous publications have been kept "so small that the original investment is only realized after the second printing," to enable those in the lower income brackets (pastors) to buy.

Communications with the Society should be directed to--Tetsuo Komoto (secretary), Japan Calvin Translation Society, Shinkyo Shuppnasha, Shin-Ogawamachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo.

#### BLIND THEOLOGICAL STUDENT'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS FEATURED IN BUDDHIST PRESS

"In November a testimonial dinner was held in Tokyo in honor of Rev. Watanabe and his wife (wife teaches in order to make it possible for him to carry on evangelism and his translation ministry). In addition to the distinguished theologians who spoke, a lay-woman and mother of a large family related not only what this translation had meant to her personally, but also told of her joy in being able to record on tape most of the Institutes for a blind theological student friend of hers. This, plus aid from other friends in getting in Braille several secondary sources, enable him to write a graduation thesis on Calvin at Tokyo Union Theological Seminary this spring. This accomplishment was featured on the front page of a leading Buddhist newspaper."

The above is quoted from the December, 1965 report of the Japan Calvin Translation Society.

#### THE SEVENTH MISSIONARY STUDY SEMINARY

The Seventh Missionary Study Seminar, meeting at the Lacy-kan in Hayama, January 5-7, has as its 1966 theme: New Life For The Church.

Bible study centering on Biblical Principles of Renewal has been sub-divided into three sessions: The Climate of Renewal, led by Ed VanBaak; leadership in Times of Renewal, led by Ernest Lang; and Marks of a Renewed People, led by W.H. Jackson.

Study papers to be presented are: "The Place of Prophecy in Revival" by Simon Baynes; "History of Christian Revival in Japan" by Darrell Thompson; Some Charismatic emphases in Our Day" by Gordon Chapman; Problems of Church Growth in Japan" by Edwin Dozier; "Renewal of Church Leadership in the Japanese Context" by William Bray; and "The Renewed Japanese Church in its relation to the World" by Mike Griffiths. Forty-minute discussion periods follow each paper.

The Seminar is maintained from year to year by the missionary participants and has no official sponsorship.



## CHRISTIAN STATISTICS

Japan's Christian Population now exceeds 794,586 according to figure just released by the authoritative Kirusuto-kyo Nenkan (Japan Christian Yearbook). The Christian community of the island nation comprises just over eight tenths of one per cent of the general population, divided among Catholic churches (333,265 communicants) and Protestant groups (461,321).

The 194,826-member United Church of Christ is the largest of Protestant churches, followed by the "Spirit of Jesus" group, with 51,042.

Japan has 5,967 Protestant and 993 Catholic churches.

## TEN BIG CHRISTIAN NEWS EVENTS FOR 1965

Every year, a panel of 20 clergy, laymen and members of the staff of the Kirisuto Shimbun (The Christ Weekly) select the "Ten Big News" activities among Christian circles in Japan. For 1965, first place was awarded to the "Vietnam Peace Mission to the U.S. A total of 181 points was awarded by the panel of 20 giving 10 points for 1st place, 9 points for 2nd place, etc.

The consultations between representatives of the Evangelical Church of Germany and the Japan NCC, in efforts to promote closer cooperation, was awarded second place with 97 points.

Dr. Noboru Iwamura's return to Nepal with his family was given 95 points for third place.

The first meeting of the World YMCA Assembly in Japan, in August, with 400 delegates attending from 53 nations was awarded fourth place honors with 85 points, which was just 1 point higher than the fifth place award given to the completion of the colloquial translation of the Bible by the Japan Catholic Church, which was in turn only 1 point higher than the sixth place awarded to the recent translation of the Bible by the Japan Bible Publishing Committee in November.

Firmly in seventh place was the trip of Kyodan Moderator Omura to Korea and efforts to improve relations between the Christians of the two lands.

The efforts of many denominations in Japan to change the emphasis from "receiving churches to giving churches", as illustrated by discussions at the March Council of Cooperation-Interboard Committee Consultations and the increasing cooperation in sending missionaries from Japan to Brazil and Southeast Asian countries, was awarded eight place.

Observance of the 100th anniversary of the Salvation Army (70 years in Japan) was awarded ninth place.

Three events tied with 35 points each for tenth place: The visit of the Japan Religionists Peace Mission to various Asian and African lands to appeal to leaders for world peace; the opposition of Japanese Christians to efforts to bring back a National Foundation Day; and the Second Meeting of the Japan Christian's Peace Conference in March.

## DOSHISHA MARKS 90TH ANNIVERSARY

Doshisha University in Kyoto, one of the oldest private universities in Japan, celebrated its founding on November 29.

As a part of the observance, devotional service was held before the grave of founder, Joseph Hardy Neeshima. Niishima with the help of Missionary, Jerome Davis of Boston, founded Doshisha English School in Kyoto in 1875.

Niishima's escape from Japan in 1864, when he was 22 years old, aboard an American ship, disregarding the Shogunate prohibition of leaving Japan, and his subsequent return to Japan after 10 years of study in the U.S. are some of the events in the life of one of the pioneers in Christian education in Japan.